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Edward Omoregbee Eguavoen Prince
University Of Ibadan, mredguavoen@gmail.com

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24/7 LIBRARY FACILITIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARY PATRONAGE IN KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

By

Edward Omoregbee Eguavoen, Ph.D

Kenneth Dike Library,

University of Ibadan

Mredguavoen@gmail.com

Introduction

University libraries play very vital roles in presenting good image of themselves through their service delivery which facilitates the provision of equitable, timely and accurate information. The university library caters for the teaching, learning and research endeavors of teachers, students and researchers as it spends enormous human, material and financial resources on library space, equipment, facilities, internet connectivity, etc., in order to enhance its service delivery to users.

Internet and its regular connectivity make it possible for people to work from anywhere. However, there is need to have a place to go where the clients can get work done outside of the typical opening hours of 8am to 10pm. This is where libraries come in. Thanks to connections to the community and endless research materials libraries are providing and availability to free Wi-Fi connectivity to the communities. The question often asked by patrons is . . . are libraries available during hours when patrons have free time to enjoy the numerous benefits they provide?

Libraries in tertiary institutions especially, university libraries have devised numerous ways to respond to pressures from users, such as extending opening hours of libraries in time of needs, especially during examination periods. Libraries globally tend to adjust as many of them are extending their opening hours to meet user needs and demands. While some libraries have adjusted opening hours, some have expanded their facilities to create serene environment for conducive learning, and accessibility to information. The Balme Library of University of Ghana is one example of academic library that have extended 24-hour service facility for users. In Nigeria also, University of Ilorin library introduced the extended- hour service during the examination periods of 2008/2009 academic session (Ajala, Arinola, Adigun and Ogunmodede, 2014) while the Kenneth Dike library, University of Ibadan operated the 24 hour library services

to users in 2012. However, Kenneth Dike library, in its quest to provide active support for academic activities and to further strengthen its pivotal role of complementing teaching, learning, research and extension programs in university of Ibadan, took up the mandate to extend its services especially, during examination periods in line with the request from the University Management and now 24/7-reading facility. This study therefore examines the 24/7 library facilities and its implications for library patronage in Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Identify frequency of use of overnight library facility by patrons of Kenneth Dike Library
- ii. Find out purposes for library visits during extended hours
- iii. Determine the level of satisfaction of patrons of overnight library facility
- iv. Identify the challenges associated with 24/7 library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library

Research questions

Four research questions were posed and answered in the course of the study.

- i. What is the frequency of use of overnight library facility by patrons of Kenneth Dike Library
- ii. For what purpose(s) do patrons visit the library during the night hours?
- iii. What is the level of satisfaction of patrons of overnight library facility?
- iv. What are the challenges associated with 24/7 library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library

Literature review

Extended service hours in Academic Libraries

The need to extend library hours in academic libraries was borne out of the desires to meet the needs of the patrons. Extending service hours according to Atuase and Koufie, (2017), implies opening libraries beyond core schedules. According to the authors, academic libraries are socially inclusive and strive to be accessible to all users regardless of their conditions and

geographical location which affords library patrons the opportunity to have maximum access to library facilities and gain professional assistance to satisfy their information desires. The extension of service hours which is espoused globally by academic libraries is to maximize access to libraries by opening at a time that would be convenient and suitable to great number of users. This also helps in responding to the demands of library users for flexible opening hours. Extended service hours operations in libraries are done regularly, but some academic libraries engage in this practice few weeks to examinations, towards the end of each semester. Studies have indicated that some libraries are yet to adopt the extended overnight service (Atuase and Koufie, 2017).

Saka (2010, carried out a study on development on extended hours services in libraries both in the developed countries and Africa. It found out that the services was more common in the developed world than in Africa. Extending library facilities beyond the normal opening hours is desirable in the light of technological changes as it facilitates easy access to the library whenever the users want to make use of the library which can be a recipe to improved academic performances, socio-economic developments of societies, improve lives and to meet general expectations of users. Adapting to extension service hours by libraries need to be addressed according to users' perception.

Library patronage during night periods

University education entails complex and comprehensive study and would require maximum hours to enable one to successfully and adequately prepare for examinations. Naturally, university students and other library users has what is known as best times which they consider suitable for studies and assimilation; this could be during dawn, morning, afternoon, evening or at night. Libraries usually experience very high patronage as they are believed to be centre for effective learning during examination periods. Saka (2010) reports that more students patronized the extended service hours in the University of Ilorin library during examination periods. Library users require secured, responsive, and serene environment to study and libraries therefore should ensure it is a priority extending service hours based on the needs and demands of their users. Curry (2003) showed in a study that users value the library because of its quiet, pleasant and convenient nature. Library extended service hour is of great importance

to students because it helps them in their research work, preparations for examinations and improving their academic performance.

Sowell and Nutefall (2014) argued in the contrary that the bid for extended service hours by students do not involve the entire students body but few vocal students. To avoid crises therefore, it implies that libraries should embrace extension of service hours with relevance to the demands and needs of their users and institutions. Libraries in academic institutions are liaisons between universities and students and they provide access to information resources in prints and electronic format. They also, provide study spaces and hold close kinship with students and their academic success. Therefore, user expectations should be prime to libraries because failure in addressing these needs might hinder libraries from achieving their purpose of existence. Although students are mostly seen as major users of library night hour services researchers also take advantage of the time to carry out other research activities. Ravenswood, Stephens, and Walton (2015) submitted in their study that undergraduate students were major advocates and users of library space and night hours for their academic activities.

Sewell (2013), in a study of 24-hour access to the University of Denver's Penrose Library identified a substantial increase in use as a result of several new and enhanced services over a six-year period. The author posited that longer operating hours and increased staffing for a 24-hours-a-day, five-days-a-week (24×5) operating schedule was funded. The study concluded by advocating the need for longer library hours and the key factors used to justify additional staffing and enhanced hours of operation.

Bowman (2013) also carried out a study to explore the adaptive measures that academic libraries perform when implementing and operating a 24-hour schedule. Five in-depth interviews were conducted with current managerial-level librarians at 24-hour academic libraries. The exploratory interviews revealed similar measures for security, budgeting, employee duties, building access, information access, and maintaining professional levels of service. Variations involved staffing, revealing differences by employment level, benefits offered, work experience, and workforce. The study found similarities which provided an important insight into the framework of a 24-hour library operation. Findings were consistent with previous research detailing patron needs, budget concerns, and service response.

Methodology

The study adopted research design of Correlational type. The population of the study comprised 285 patrons which the extended library facility could accommodate during the night hours in the 2017/2018 session when the study was conducted. Questionnaire was the main instrument used to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into five sections namely sections A, B, C D and E. Section A consists of five items on demographic information of respondents, section B comprises items relating to frequency of use of extended library facility, Section C consists of items relating to purpose of use, section D consists of items on patrons' satisfaction while section E was structured to elicit information on challenges associated with extended library facility. Each of sections B, C, D and E consists of ten items measured of a four-point scale. Three hundred (300) copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents out of which 285 were returned and 247 were found usable for analysis. This represents 82.3% response rate. The data obtained were organized, collated and analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Results

Results of the finding of the study were presented as follow:

Socio-demographic information of respondents such as age, sex, faculty, level of study

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies (n=247)	Percentages
Age in years	16-20 years	56	22.7
	21 -25	60	24.3
	26-30	34	13.8
	31-30	32	13.0
	31-35	21	8.5
	36-40	35	14.2
	41 and above	9	3.6
Gender	Male	134	54.3
	Female	113	45.7

Level of study	100	45	18.2
	200	63	25.5
	300	31	12.6
	400	49	19.8
	500	37	15.0
	Postgraduate	22	8.9
Faculty of study	Agriculture	16	7.3
	Arts	28	11.3
	Economics	15	6.1
	Education	23	9.3
	Law	29	11.7
	Science	26	10.5
	Social sciences	25	10.1
	Technology	24	9.7
	Renewable Natural Resources	12	4.9
	Institute of African studies	4	1.6
	CEPEEL	3	1.2
	IPSS	3	1.2
	College of Medicine	37	15.0

It could be observed from the information provided in Table 1 that ten faculties, one academic centre, two institutes and the College of medicine were represented in the study. The result showed that College of Medicine had 37 students which represented 15.0% of the respondents were from college of Medicine and this was the highest. This was followed by Faculty of Law which had 29(11.7%) and Education (28; 11.3%). The least number of respondents were from the CEPEEL and IPSS with 3(1.2%) respondents in each case. This shows that students in almost all academic faculties made use of overnight library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library. Result on gender revealed that majority of the respondents were male (134; 54.3%) while female constituted 113 (45.7%) of the respondents. This result implied that there was a relatively balanced gender distribution as the marginal difference in gender was not significantly high.

On level of study, results shows that 63(25.5%) were in 200 level while 400 level students 49(19.8%). It could be noted that Postgraduate students were least in number of users of overnight library facilities in Kenneth Dike Library. Similarly, distribution of ages of respondents showed that 56(22.7%) were between 16-20 years, 60(24.3%) were aged between 21-25 years and only 9(3.6%) were aged 41 years and above. It could be inferred that patrons of extended library facility were predominantly young undergraduates between the ages of 16 to 25 years.

Answers to the research questions

Research question 1: What is the frequency of use of overnight library facility by patrons of Kenneth Dike Library?

Table 2: Frequency of use of extended hours by library patrons

Item	Freq.	Percentage
Daily	43	17.4
Twice a week	81	32.8
Thrice a week	72	29.1
Weekly	23	9.3
Twice a month	17	4.5
Monthly	11	6.9

Results shown in Table 2 indicated that 81(32.1%) of the respondents used extended hours library facility twice a week, 72(29.1%) while only 11(6.9%) claimed they used the facility once in a month. It could be deduced from this result that library patrons frequently used the extended library facility

Research Question 2: For what purpose(s) do patrons visit the library during the night hours?

Purpose of use

Purpose of using library overnight	Freq.	Percent
Reading for examination	88	35.6
Private study	50	20.3
Group discussion	19	7.5
Conducive environment	41	16.6
To have internet access	27	10.9
Constant electricity	22	8.9
Total	247	100.0

Results shown in Table 7 indicated that the main purpose for which users patronize library facility during the night hours was to read for examinations as represented by 88(35.6%) and 50(20.3%) used the extended library facility for private study while only 19(7.5%) used extended facility for group discussion.

Research question 3: what is the level of satisfaction of patrons to overnight library facility in Kenneth Dike Library?

In order to provide answer to this research question, respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the listed items on a 4-point scale and the result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Level of satisfaction of library patrons to overnight facility in Kenneth Dike Library

S/N	Items	Responses									
		Highly Satisfied		Satisfied		Fairly Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Mean	St.D
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1.	security situation in the library during the night hours	130	52.6	97	39.3	15	6.1	5	2.0	3.4251	0.883
2.	Reading atmosphere of the library	157	63.6	37	15.0	29	11.7	24	9.7	3.6279	0.964
3.	Library services provided during the night hours	95	38.5	104	42.1	25	10.1	23	9.3	2.6576	0.951
4.	Electricity situation in the library during the night hours	121	49.0	112	45.3	11	4.5	3	1.2	3.2105	0.721
5.	Toilet facilities	83	33.6	133	53.8	26	10.5	5	2.0	2.2984	0.833
1.	Reading furniture	81	32.8	115	46.6	36	14.6	15	6.1	3.3765	0.881
2.	Sitting arrangement	98	39.7	137	55.5	7	2.8	5	2.0	3.3198	0.698
3.	Sitting capacity	78	31.6	144	58.3	6	2.4	19	7.7	2.085	0.998

4.	Internet access	113	45.7	111	44.9	14	5.7	9	3.6	2.392 7	0.78 3
5.	Opportunity to plug phones and laptops	28	11.3	73	29.5	99	40.1	47	19.0	2.210 1	1.01
Overall mean score = 27.6036											

Results on students' satisfaction on 24/7 library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library revealed that the item "reading atmosphere of the library" had the highest mean score of 3.66 with standard deviation of 3.22. Specifically, 157(63.6%) indicated that they were highly satisfied, with reading atmosphere provided by the library, 37(15.0%) were satisfied, 29(11.7%) were fairly satisfied while only 24(9.7%) claimed they were not satisfied. This means that most of the library patrons were satisfied with the reading atmosphere provided during the night by the library. This was followed by the Item on security situation in the library during the night hours (mean=3.42; St.D= 0.98). The result on this item showed that 130 (52.6%) of the respondents maintained they were highly satisfied, 97(39.3%) claimed they were satisfied, 15(6.1%) indicated they were fairly satisfied and 5(2.0%)) claimed they were not satisfied with the security situation of the library during the night hours.

On the other hand, the least mean score of 1.210 (STD =1.011) was recorded for item 10 namely "opportunity to plug phones and laptops" which clearly showed that students who patronized night hour library facility were not satisfied with the fact that they could not plug their phones and laptops in the library during the night hours.

Finally, the use of test norm was adopted to determine the overall level of satisfaction of library patrons to overnight library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library. From Table 4, the maximum obtainable mean score is 40.00(4 x 10 items). The mean score range of 1.01- 13.33 indicates a low level of satisfaction, 13.34-.26.67 indicates a moderate level of satisfaction and 26.68 – 40.00. The overall mean score recorded as shown in Table 4.3 was 27.23 which fall within the range of high level of satisfaction. Hence, it is concluded that the level of satisfaction of library patrons to 24/7 facility provided by Kenneth Dike library was high.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges associated with 24/7 library facility provided by Kenneth Dike Library

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with items relating to challenges encountered during the night hours of library facilities in Kenneth Dike Library. The result is shown in Table

Table 5: Challenges of 24/7 library facility in KDL

S/N	Items	Responses									
		Strongly agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly disagreed		Mean	St.D
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1.	Security issues	32	13.0	69	27.9	135	54.7	11	4.5	3.1279	0.804
2.	Lack of access to library services	15	6.1	138	55.9	90	36.4	4	1.6	2.0656	1.000
3.	Lack of supervision by library staff	92	37.2	113	45.7	10	4.0	32	13.0	3.1619	0.938
4.	Lack of socket outlets to plug laptops and phones	16	6.5	96	38.9	129	52.2	6	2.4	3.3684	0.979
5.	Inadequate toilet facilities and restrooms	93	37.7	105	42.5	28	11.3	21	8.5	3.0648	0.946
6.	Inadequate reading space	23	9.3	87	35.2	119	48.2	18	7.3	3.1741	0.774
7.	Lack of internet access	138	55.9	81	32.8	18	7.3	10	4.0	3.2429	1.040
8.	Disruptive electricity supply	75	30.4	148	59.9	17	6.9	7	2.8	3.0237	0.793

9.	Lack of access to library materials	25	10.1	131	53.0	25	10.1	6	2.4	3.1943	0.789
10	Overcrowding	171	69.2	62	25.1	11	4.5	3	1.2	3.6235	0.692

Results as shown in Table 5 revealed that among the prominent challenges identified were overcrowding with a mean score of 3.62 (STD=0.692), lack of socket outlets to plug laptops and phones (mean =3.37, STD= 0.979) and lack of internet access with a mean score of 3.34 (STD=1.040). On the contrary, the lowest mean score was recorded with the statement “lack of access to library services” (mean=2.0656; standard deviation = 1.000). It could be inferred from the result shown in Table 8 that the challenges faced by library patrons during overnight reading were lack of socket outlets, lack of internet access and inadequate toilet facilities and restroom.

Conclusion

Library and information services of the 21st century has gone beyond conventional hours of opening due to the diverse needs of the patrons. As such it is therefore incumbent upon the academic libraries to attract greater patronage by extending the facility of libraries to meet the need of users 24 hours a day and seven times a week.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were considered necessary in view of the findings of the study:

There is the need to expand the carrying capacity of the reading facility and seating space for library users as overcrowding was one of the main challenges identified in the course of the study. This could be achieved by creating more reading space as well as table and chairs to accommodate at least 1000 users at a time considering the population of the students.

The level of satisfaction of patrons can be improved upon by providing access to the internet facility during the night hours as well as socket outlets which they can plug their laptops and i-pads to enhance their study.

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